NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
PRODUCT DESCRIPTION DOCUMENT (PDD)
MAY 20, 2002

IFPS GRIDS TO CUSTOMERS

NOTICE: This publication is available at: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/XXXX.

GRIDS TO CUSTOMERS SERVICE

Part I - Mission Connection

Advances in computer capabilities and web services technologies, as well as scientific advances in NWS software, have afforded the National Weather Service an opportunity to create customer-based products and services. The National Digital Forecast Database (NDFD) will allow NWS to provide near-real time, coordinated forecasts that are widely accessible. The gridded format allows for rapid visual scanning of a large number of forecast parameters/values and is readily decodable for those who wish to create derived products.

The NDFD will:

- improve communications to the public
- provide increased forecast resolution and gridded data to the public
- provide customer information that will assist in decision-making processes
- increase forecast and warning accessibility

Currently, NDFD is intended for use by large volume users of forecast information to provide constructive feedback that assist us in refining the database. It will eventually be available to the general public.

Comments

We are always seeking to improve our products based on user feedback. Comments on the Grids to Customers product may be addressed to:

National Weather Service Headquarters
1325 E-W Highway, SSMC2
Silver Spring, MD 20910
ATTN: David Ruth

Part II - Technical Description

Initially these data will be furnished in GRIB format (Version 2) for two sectors within the Conterminous United States on 5 km grids. Files will contain forecasts for daytime maximum

temperature, nighttime minimum temperature, probability of precipitation (PoP12) , surface temperature, dewpoint temperature, sky cover, wind direction, and wind speed out to 7 days. Updates will be made available at the top of each hour. Forecast grids that include the next day 7 will be introduced at 1800 UTC each day.

Files for the Mid-Atlantic cluster will contain forecast mosaics over the County Warning Areas of the following 6 NWS Weather Forecast Offices in the eastern United States:
FFC - Atlanta, Georgia
GSP - Greer, South Carolina
JKL - Jackson, Kentucky
MRX - Knoxville, Tennessee
RLX - Charleston, West Virginia
RNK - Blacksburg, Virginia

Files for the Central Plains will contain forecast mosaics over the County Warning Areas of the following 7 NWS Weather Forecast Offices in the central United States:
EAX - Kansas City, Missouri
ICT - Wichita, Kansas
OAX - Omaha, Nebraska
OUN - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
SGF - Springfield, Missouri
TOP - Topeka, Kansas
TSA - Tulsa, Oklahoma

More specific information on the content of these files can be obtained at:
www.nws.noaa.gov/xxx/tbd

Product Preparation and Format Example

This product is created at NWS Weather Forecast Offices across most of the United States via Interactive Forecast Preparation software. This database is the NWS first attempt to provide forecast information to our users in this format. Therefore, user feedback is extremely important in our effort to provide quality information to our customers, partners, and the general public.

Table 1. GRIDS TO CUSTOMERS Product Example

Examples of the files listed above can be downloaded from: www.nws.noaa.gov/xxx/tbd

Part III - Appendix

How to Read and Interpret the Grids to Customers Product

Documentation and decoder routines for GRIB Version 2 can be obtained from http://www.nws.noaa.gov/mdl/iwt/